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THE MONROE COUNTY CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION

The Monroe County Classical Association, a branch of The Classical Association of New York State, held its sixth quarterly meeting recently, at the East High School, Rochester. Professor Irving E. Miller, of the University of Rochester, read a paper on Humanizing the Teaching of Latin and Greek, urging that pupils be taught to apply their growing knowledge of Latin to their environment. The teacher should make the pupils feel that Latin is all about them, that it constitutes the greater part of their everyday vocabulary, and that it is the basis of all scientific terms. Mr. Edwin M. Wright spoke on Definiteness in Lesson Assignments. A thousand legitimate questions may conceivably be asked on any assignment of fifteen or twenty lines of Latin or Greek. If the pupils are to prepare their lessons properly, they must know definitely, in advance, for which of these they will be held responsible, or, at least, for what sorts of questions they will be held accountable. Mr. Wright described a plan used in the East High School to accomplish this end. Dr. Mason D. Gray gave a demonstration of The First Day in a Latin Class¹. C. K.

THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK STATE

At a meeting held in Syracuse in the closing days of last December the organization of The Classical Association of New York State was finally effected, in accordance with the plans outlined in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 8.88. The Association has already organized county branches in most of the counties of the state. It will not, however, organize such branches in territory already covered by existing Classical Associations, such as The New York Latin Club, and the Upper Hudson Classical Club. Plans are under consideration for the affiliation of The Classical Association of New York State with The Classical Association of the Atlantic States. C. K.

THE NEW YORK LATIN CLUB

A special meeting of the Club will be held on Saturday, March 6, in Room 530, Washington Irving High School, at 10.30, to discuss some problem of First Year Latin. The meeting is open not only to members of the Club, but to every one interested in the problems of beginners' Latin.

¹This account is compiled on the basis of a reprint of a report of the meeting in a Rochester paper.—In connection with the point made by Mr. Wright reference may be made to two things. (1) Mr. E. D. Daniels's Latin Drill and Composition, reviewed in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 8.110-111, aims to accomplish for the Caesar work what Mr. Wright desires. (2) In 1906, the late Professor H. W. Johnston published, through Messrs. Scott, Foresman and Company (Chicago), a brief pamphlet, entitled Teaching Second Year Latin, in which he declared that the trouble with the work of the second year is "due, nine-tenths of it at least, to the failure of the teacher so to assign the lessons and conduct the recitations that the pupil may make adequate preparation for them, or, in other words, to hazy, indefinite and shifting methods of teaching". The whole pamphlet deserves careful study.

WAR, ANCIENT AND MODERN

The newspapers recently contained references to a constitutional amendment proposed by Senator Owen, whose purpose was that an offensive war should be declared only after a referendum vote. The power of the President to call out troops to resist invasion would be left unaltered, but the approval of the people would be necessary for an offensive war. It is worth while to call attention to the fact that this corresponds to the Roman theory, at least that which prevailed after 427 B. C., when the tribunes succeeded in establishing the principle that a *senatus consultum* without a confirming vote of the assembly was insufficient for declaring war (see Livy 4.30.15; Botsford, Roman Assemblies 230). The Romans seem to have regarded all wars as defensive: would it work the same way with us?

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH.

EVAN T. SAGE.

THE PLUTEI TO THE FRONT

If we could persuade our students in Caesar to read the chapter about Roman military matters, in the preface of the text-book, they would find something like the following: One of the constructions used in siege operations was the *pluteus*. This was a heavy movable breastwork or screen, resting on rollers; it was usually seven or eight feet high, with loopholes through which archers could discharge arrows. They were used especially as a defense against missiles when it was desired to construct an *agger* or dike up to the walls of a fortified city which could not be taken by a sudden assault. Behind a row of such *plutei*, moved forward from time to time, the different sections and stories of the *agger* were built, while the arrows from the wall rattled harmlessly off the exposed front of the *plutei*.

In a despatch from Petrograd, dated January 25, in an account of the fighting about twenty-five miles west of Warsaw, the following statement occurs:

In this fighting the Germans put into use improvised steel shields which were moved forward for the protection of trench diggers. Behind these shields the diggers worked until two lines of trenches had been pushed to within a few hundred yards of the Russian positions. So close and accurate was the firing that a hat hoisted on the point of a bayonet would be riddled with a shower of bullets from the opposing trench.

Now I remember a student who, being asked if the Romans were good at philosophy, replied instantly, "No, they were practical men!" Whatever may be said of the Germans, no one will accuse them of being impractical; and their use of the Roman *plutei* is eminently a practical measure. With such impeccable evidence, might not even the champions of vocational training admit that Latin has some claims to being a practical study?

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ROLAND G. KENT.